

A. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Palmer City Council was held on April 26, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers, Palmer, Alaska.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Pippel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Comprising a quorum of the Council, the following were present:

Brad Hanson	Kathrine Vanover
Ken Erbey	Tony Pippel
Jim Wood	Steve Carrington

Also in attendance were the following:

Tom Healy, City Manager
Jack Snodgrass, City Attorney
Janette Bower, City Clerk

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The following items were approved with the approval of the consent agenda. Item G.I. was removed from the agenda.

1. Approval of Consent Agenda
 - a. Introduction – Ordinance No. 05-021: Amending Palmer Municipal Code 18.15.010 to Clarify the Qualifications for Council Members (IM 05-041)
 - b. Introduction – Ordinance No. 05-022: Enacting Subsection 8.36.020 (G) of Section 8.36.020 (Specific Acts Designated) of Title 8 (Health and Safety) of the Palmer Municipal Code (IM 05-044)
 - c. Introduction – Ordinance No. 05-023-Z-5: Rezoning Tax Parcel 17N02E06D029, From AG (Agricultural District) to R1E (Single Family Residential Estate District) (IM 05-042)
 - d. Introduction – Ordinance No. 05-024: Amending Section 17.84.020 (Permitted Locations for Planned Unit Development) of Title 17 (Zoning) to Include R3, Medium Density Residential District and R4, High Density Residential District (IM 05-043)
 - e. Action Memorandum 05-034: Authorize City Manager to Extend an Agreement for the Employee Assistance Program with Magellan Behavioral Health, Inc.
2. Minutes of Previous Meetings – *the minutes were approved as presented.*
 - a. April 12, 2005, Regular Meeting

D. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Member Wood.

E. COMMUNICATIONS AND APPEARANCE REQUESTS

1. Steve Gallagher, ARRC – Alaska Farmland Trust

Mr. Gallagher reported on the following items:

- The formation of a private non-profit corporation called Alaska Farmland Trust;
- The purpose of the organization is to work in conjunction with USDA and ARRC who offer funding designated for the protection of farmland;
- The program would allow the owner of a farm to sell the development rights to USDA, the owner would then retain a permanent easement on property;
- The property must remain in the state of agricultural production;
- ARRC would inspect the property to ensure production;
- USDA has a 50% matching funds grant program;
- Discussion ensued regarding the formation of a community group to investigate and plan the program; meetings with the community have begun and will continue after the receipt of the non-profit status;
- The program allows the farm to go back to native vegetation; contracts will be held with USDA, ARRC and land owner regarding the state of the farm;
- Looking for participation from the Borough, City and State;
- Available funds– during the current year there \$1.2 million federal dollars available for the grassland program and \$1.2 million for the farmland program;
- Discussion ensued regarding the responsibilities of the Trust and ARRC.

F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Rick Shields read excerpts from an Iowa State University study which spoke of the consequences of a large retail establishment within a small community. Mr. Shields stated that he has been taken to task to stop the development of a Wal-Mart in the community and will hold the council responsible for their decisions. He asked that the large retail establishment ordinance be re-examined.

Kelly Sidebottom highlighted her research of Wal-Mart and their reported unfair work practices. She explained the community in which she had previously resided and the damage to the community caused by Wal-Mart. She offered the following solutions as uses for the property: a community garden, the retention of Valley Pathways on the property and the location of a skateboard park. She explained the availability of grant funds to develop the property and asked for a moratorium on the LRE ordinance.

Evie McNamee stated that the council has not listened to the organization and one of the council members should have been in attendance at the community meeting regarding Wal-Mart. She suggested that rather than inviting large businesses, small businesses be invited into the community. Ms. McNamee reported that her store has been jam-packed with shoppers. She stated that the People for Palmer organization may be small but important.

Maryann Cockle clarified the Borough document regarding Palmer as the only original colony. She stated that as a member of People for Palmer, she will be researching LREs and possible

changes within the ordinance. She spoke of a group whose desire is to establish a land trust for the property. Ms. Cockle suggested the council view a video called Store Wars which speaks of town very similar to Palmer and the similarities of the two towns.

G. ACTION MEMORANDUMS

Item 1 – Action Memorandum 05-032: Authorize Donation to Palmer Museum of History and Art Board Members for \$2000

Clerk’s note: Item 1 was removed from the agenda during the approval of the agenda.

Item 2 – Action Memorandum 05-035: Authorize Donation to the American Red Cross of Alaska

MOVED BY:	Hanson	To authorize a donation to the American Red Cross of Alaska in the amount of \$1,500
SECONDED BY:	Carrington	

City Manager Healy explained the request and history of previous donations to the organization.

Council Member Hanson asked of the use of the donation by the organization last year. It was explained that the money was used to purchase defibrillators.

Council Member Wood stated that the organization was a deserving and hard working organization but opposed support by City.

Council Member Vanover suggested that the item be tabled until a report could be generated showing the history of council donations for the previous two years. Council Member Wood voiced his opposition to tabling the item and stated that a grant program should be established. Council Member Vanover stated that because the City is in the middle of the fiscal year, a formalized process should not be addressed.

Council Member Carrington voiced his support of donations for non-profit organizations but expressed the need for requesting agencies to have a connection with, and benefit to, the City.

Council Member Hanson voiced his opposition to a formalized system and stated that donations should be based solely on the organization’s benefit to the City.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Pippel explained that during his past six years on council, council donation monies were not fully expended by the council. He voiced his opposition to the establishment of a formalized system and to the donation due to the fact that the monies would not have a direct benefit to the City.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION:	Motion failed by 5-1 (Hanson) voice vote.
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Item 3 – Action Memorandum 05-036: Authorize City Manager to Award Lease Lots at the Palmer Municipal Airport

MOVED BY:	Vanover	To authorize the city manager to award lease lots at the Palmer Municipal Airport to KAE, Inc., Premier Builders/Treasure Creek Investments and Aeroboat
SECONDED BY:	Erbey	

City Manager Healy explained the action as authorizing the acceptance of the submitted proposals. He explained the proposals received and the scoring criteria of each proposal. He stated that following approval, administration would prepare the leases for council approval.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Pippel asked of the reason for the lack of responses from previously interested parties and their lack of submitted proposals. City Manager Healy stated that he was uncertain of the reason for the lack of response.

City Manager Healy provided options to lease the available lots and stated that he would have further information before the council at the next meeting.

Council Member Hanson stated that it is in the best interest that the City retain some of the lots for future leases.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION:	Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
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Item 4 – Action Memorandum 05-038: Authorize the City Manager to Approve Placement of the Pathway Portable Classrooms to the MSBSD Administration Site (Old Sherrod School), Palmer High School, or Palmer Junior High for up to Three Years

MOVED BY:	Hanson	To authorize the city manager to approve placement of the Pathway Portable Classrooms to the MSBSD Administration Site (Old Sherrod School), Palmer High School, or Palmer Junior High for up to Three Years
SECONDED BY:	Erbey	

Mayor Pro-Tempore Pippel highlighted the memo by Sara Jansen, Community Development Coordinator regarding the site selected by the Planning and Zoning Commission as the Administration Building (old Sherrod School).

City Manager Healy explained the required approval by the council and the requested authorization of a temporary site for three years.

Council Member Vanover stated that Valley Pathways is an incredible school and spoke of the previous opposition to the school. She stated that she would be honored to have the location in neighborhood.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION:	Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
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Item 5 – Action Memorandum 05-040: Authorize Formation of Tri-City Transportation Committee and Selection of Two Palmer City Council Members to Participate on the Committee

MOVED BY:	Vanover	To authorize the formation of a Tri-City Transportation Committee and selection of two palmer city council members to participate on the committee
SECONDED BY:	Erbey	

Mayor Pro-Tempore Pippel highlighted the joint work session with the City’s of Houston and Wasilla. He explained the issue of the City’s of pushing the Borough, State and Feds to build a corridor to connect the cities. He explained the purpose of the sub-committee. Council Member’s Vanover and Carrington were selected to serve on the committee.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION:	Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
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H. HEARINGS, ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Item 1 – Public Hearing – Ordinance No. 05-020: Amending Section 2.04.110 (Order of Business) of Title 2 (Administration and Personnel) of the Palmer Municipal Code (IM 05-037)

MOVED BY:	Vanover	To adopt ordinance no. 05-020
SECONDED BY:	Carrington	

Mayor Pro-Tempore Pippel opened the public hearing for ordinance no. 05-020. There were no persons who wished to testify.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION:	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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Item 2 – Public Hearing – Resolution No. 05-010: Supporting the Alaska Gasline Port Authority's All-Alaska Gasline Project (IM 05-040)

MOVED BY:	Vanover	To adopt resolution no. 05-010
SECONDED BY:	Hanson	

Mayor Pro-Tempore Pippel opened the public hearing for resolution no. 05-010. There were no persons who wished to testify.

Council Member Hanson voiced his support of the resolution.

Council Member Erbey asked of the intent of the resolution. Mayor Pro-Tempore Pippel explained the resolution as a show of support for the organization and its desire to create an all-Alaskan pipeline.

Council Member Wood stated that the resolution shows our support and explained that if other communities show their support, collectively the resolution would provide a large show of support.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION:	Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
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I. BIDS

J. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

K. NEW BUSINESS

L. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Healy reported on the following items:

- Parking issue – will have a report at the next meeting;
- 911 funding – the legislature has proposed an increase in funding to \$1.50 per month per phone line, agencies in the Valley met in Senator Green's office to discuss how the monies were to be spent; the discussion led to an agreement signed by the involved entities, City Manager Healy highlighted the agreement which contains a provision of how the funds are authorized and how the monies can be spent, he further explained the function of the 911 board;
- Southwest Utility Extension Project – met with legislators regarding the funding, fairly confident of re-allocation of funding; the bid containing the sewer project with the water

as an additive alternate has been advertised with a bid award date of June 7; City Manager Healy highlighted a letter from DEC regarding pipe separation use, DEC continues to disallow single trench construction; met with Triad during monthly meeting, explained the established rate to transport wastewater, Mayor Pro-Tempore Pippel recommended that the manager travel to Juneau to continue lobbying efforts;

- Bond refinance – the golf course bond has been refinanced with a savings of \$95,000;
- Audit – the final audit will distributed at next meeting, the auditor will report during the second meeting of May;
- Discussion ensued regarding the employment of Allan Ossakow. Mr. Ossakow will finish his employment with the City following the finalization of the GASB reports.

M. CITY CLERK'S REPORT

Ms. Bower reported on the following items:

- Elections – work on the 2005 election has begun; highlighted her conversation with Carol Thompson of the Division of Elections regarding a second precinct within Palmer, she explained that both she and Ms. Thompson agree that the precinct should become effective for the 2006 election;
- Website – highlighted the recent viewer statistics using the website; spoke of the ability to “stream” council meetings. Discussion ensued regarding virtual tours and the use of webcams.

N. RECORD OF ITEMS PLACED ON THE TABLE

The following items were placed on the table:

- Letter from Tiny DePriest;
- Memo from Sara Jansen, Community Development Coordinator;
- Finance reports from the Finance Department.

O. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Kelly Sidebottom asked for an explanation of the site chosen for Valley Pathways. City Manager Healy briefly explained the previous action of allowing a temporary site for three years.

Mary Cockle voiced her support of a donation grant process for outside entities. Ms. Cockle urged the council to further consider a web cam and spoke of its possible location.

P. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Vanover highlighted her vacation and apologized for her non-attendance at the Saturday meeting. She stated her pride of being from Alaska and explained her excitement of serving on the transportation sub-committee.

Council Member Wood recognized the audience for their participation and stated his desire that they continue to be involved even after their issues are resolved. He recognized the Public Works Department for their response to a problem with a grader and the spreading of oil and explained that within 15 minutes of calling, an employee responded to the issue.

Council Member Carrington stated the somewhat appropriateness of being accosted downtown for not attending the Saturday night meeting and he stated that he has heard rumors of Friday night meeting. He voiced his plan to be in attendance.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Pippel encouraged the public to become involved and commented on the appropriate behavior of those in opposition to the Wal-Mart facility. He voiced his agreement with a lot of things that were said and explained that he holds a different responsibilities than those of the group. He voiced his appreciation for their work. Mayor Pro-Tempore Pippel wished Mayor Combs speedy get well wishes and reminded the council of the joint work session on April 28, 2005.

S. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

APPROVED THIS 10th day of May, 2005.

/s/

John C. Combs, Mayor

/s/

Janette M. Bower, City Clerk